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THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.



ARTISTIC RESIDENCES OF PHILADELPHIA.

BY H. T. CRESSON.

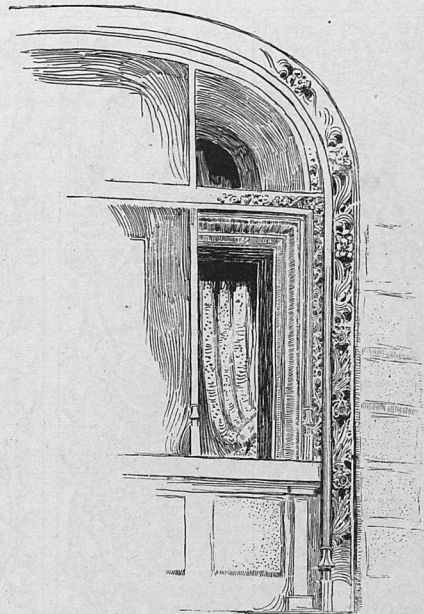
(SECOND PAPER.)

HERE is a period between the Colonial style of architecture and that of the present day, which cannot but be remarked by the stranger who may chance to stroll through the streets of Philadelphia—we have referred to it in our first paper published in *THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER*, as the "red brick front." If the footsteps of the visitor lead him through the upper section of the city a little before midday, when the business portion of its population has departed down town on money making errands, it only needs the long green shutters of the front door to recall the streets of a Hollandish town, and the illusion is quite complete in certain places where the turbid waters of the Schuylkill river are to be seen glittering in the sunlight.

It is hard to account for the origin of this mixed architecture, but it may in all probability be a combination of bad English and Netherlandish styles. Another explanation may be suggested, that the excessively plain tastes and frigid ideas of the Friendly people, who succeeded those of the good old Colonial times, demanded from draftsmen this peculiarly ugly combination of square front doors and windows. The ornamental wood work, which added so much to the picturesque appearance of the exterior of a Colonial dwelling, was for the same reason expunged by the descendants of the sect referred to, so that the world might be impressed with their purity of belief and the austerity of their lives, even greater than that of their ancestors.

This outward display of red and white as a religious emblem in all its plainness, did much, however, later on to advance the love of the beautiful among those of our citizens who were of a more worldly turn of mind, causing them to express their contempt for such narrow minded ideas by erecting dwellings, the decoration and design of which throughout are daily becoming more refined as the artistic tastes of the architects and people are cultivated.

In 1794 the house erected by a leading family of the Quaker City was termed "Morris' Folly," from the fact that its handsome decoration, bas-reliefs and stone work, designed by M. L'Enfant and executed by Jardella, were innovations, exciting the envy of those who could not bear to see "worldly display." Although this primal attempt at grandeur of style in architecture was never completed, and finally dismantled, the good seeds which were then sown and almost died out in the red brick front period, seem to have revived, forming a connecting link between the present style and the relics of those times, which are now so eagerly sought after when the effects of Colon-



WINDOW IN HOUSE OF JAMES SCOTT.

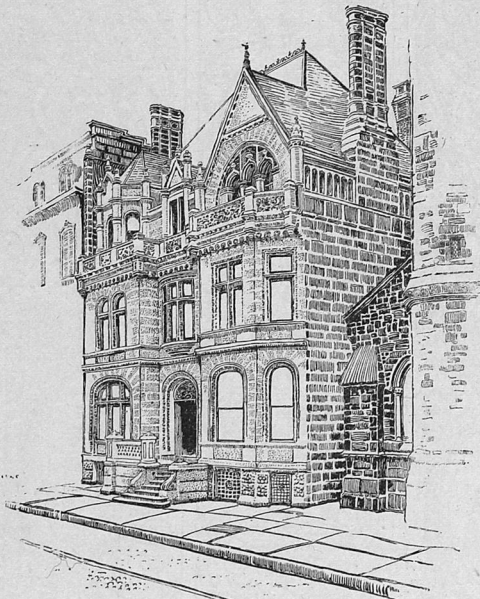
ial families chance to come under the auctioneer's hammer. Great Walnut and Spruce Street, which have grown into prominence during the last thirty years, are at present the fashionable quarters, just as Front, Third and South Fourth Street, were many years ago. Even the prejudices which existed against North Broad Street, Green, Spring Garden and Girard Avenue, as places of residence, are being gradually overcome, and wealth is making many formerly considered social barriers, fashionable.

Where wealth is combined with enlightened minds and tastes, the desire to educate the eye and surround it with beautiful forms and objects, has become a matter of serious study—even the exterior appearance of the square in which one lives, is quite as important a theme of discussion as the interior of the house in which one dwells. It is a praiseworthy fact that architects are beginning to study these important considerations, and on West Walnut Street a striking example of it is noticeable in the residence of James Scott, Esq., designed by Mr. Theophilus Chandler, Jr., architect.

This handsome dwelling is built of white limestone, decorated in the highest style of Renaissance art. An especial feature is a lower window, the moldings of which are rich in artistic carvings, executed by hand after the stones had been placed in position. This same method is pursued by the Parisian artisans in decorating the façades of buildings. The stone chosen for this dwelling offers peculiar advantages, from the fact that when it is fresh from the quarry it can easily be handled with ordinary cutting tools, exposure to the air, for a short period, rendering it almost as hard and durable as granite.

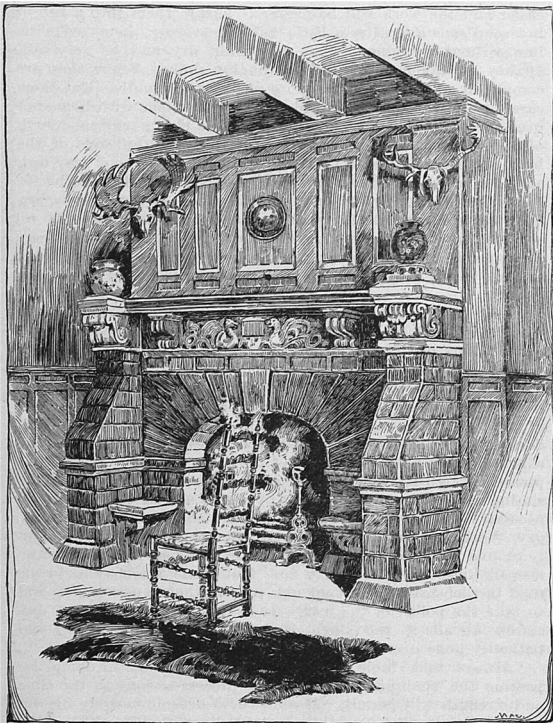
The National Museum at Washington, among the collection of photographs arranged to show the different materials that are used for building purposes, possesses a view of the Scott house as a typical example of carving in limestone. As it was used with so much success in this instance the example has been followed by other builders, and this stone now serves not only for outside but interior purposes as well, such as fireplaces, cornices, pillars, etc.

The clever penwork in the illustration, drawn by H. McCarter, Esq., conveys a good idea of the Scott residence as it appears while the observer is descending Walnut street, and its graceful lines form one of the most pleasing architectural compositions which one encounters west of Broad Street. The flight of steps leading to the house is especially to be remarked for its unique arrangement, and it is really refreshing for the eye to see so much careful study expended by the architect upon what at first seems to the casual observer as a petty consideration, but on which in reality depends much of the grace and beauty of the composition of an exterior. However skillfully the different lines of a front may be arranged, if the stoop be faulty and end in an unrefined manner upon the ground line, it mars the effect of the whole ensemble, and it is here that Mr. Chandler displays one of the strongest points of composition in the Scott residence, by elegance of arrangement, thus sustaining the reputation which he has attained as Philadelphia's leading architect.



EXTERIOR OF HOUSE OF JAMES SCOTT.

THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.



FIREPLACE IN HOUSE ON CHESTNUT HILL, PHILADELPHIA, DESIGNED BY THEOPHILUS CHANDLER, JR., ARCHITECT.

Probably the most successful piece of work ever designed by this talented young architect, was a chimney and fireplace that now graces the summer residence of a wealthy banker at Chestnut Hills.

The illustration gives a faint idea of the original, but in order to appreciate its strong points one must see the entire composition, with its elk horn accessories, shields and other ornamentations, so that they can be impressed with the spirit and pure Renaissance feeling that pervades the work. The bench in the angle of the fireplace is a most inviting nook, upon which one might repose and dream away the "wee sma' hours" in the ruddy glow of the blazing hearth, for where all that surrounds us is beautiful and pleasing to the eye, we cannot but feel its influence, thus elevating our minds to higher and more noble thoughts, than if we were depressed by contemplating the commonplace productions of mediocrity.

MINOR ARTS OF DECORATION.

TO preserve or improve the appearance of interiors, and to modify their aspects from time to time, is properly a matter of concern with the members of a household. Artistic taste is a life-giving spirit, always suggesting some pleasing novelty. A hundred little items of practical knowledge on different points bearing on restorations which save renewals, and of various forms of constructive work in design and arrangement, are needed, and we propose to bring a number of them together. Even the professional decorator will appreciate the value of not a few, for many can be executed only by skilled hands.

We will first of all take articles of metal, which are tarnished or require to be polished. One mode of protecting them with a mixture of one part of paraffin and three parts of petroleum, applying this with a soft brush. Brass may be washed in soap-suds with a soft brush, then rinsed in hot water and dried in sawdust to retain its brightness. Articles of metal that have lost their lustre may have it renewed, in many instances, by dipping them in a cold solution of oil of vitriol five parts, nitric acid two and a half parts, spirits of salts two drachms. Solid brass furniture mountings and other brass articles are best polished by rubbing them with powdered rotten stone and a little kerosene oil, then rubbing with whiting and wiping with an oily cloth.

To restore tarnished silver, a solution of cyanide of potassium in water, used as a wash, and then polishing with soft leather and rouge will suffice; but this mixture is poisonous and it will be better to use a mixture of emery and pumice, to be brought

with oil to the consistency of a paste. A good plate cleaning mixture consists of equal parts of the finest rouge and prepared chalk, mixed and applied dry with soft leather. Jewelry may be cleaned and brightened by rubbing on it with a brush ammonia and cream of tartar mixed, then washing it. Gilt mountings may be restored by washing them with a weak solution of borax in water, then rubbing with a piece of Canton flannel, first warming them if possible.

To gild metal it is simply necessary to apply a solution of gold and nitric acid, then heat the surface, as evaporating the quicksilver. The black film left, on being again exposed to heat, will show the gold. The lustre of gilt mountings may be improved by first heating them and then rubbing them with a little cotton flannel.

Picture frames will often look as though they needed regilding, when all that is necessary to reviving them is to apply with a soft brush a mixture of white of eggs two ounces and one ounce of chloride. King's yellow and Indian yellow, if shadowed with burnt amber and gamboge, or a mixture of lake and gamboge, makes on a surface a very good imitation of gilt. Defaced gilding, the fault being the dust that clings to it, will look bright and new by being coated with wet fuller's earth, and on this drying, receiving a washing of oxgall with a sponge. Often china will exhibit the mere remains of gold ornament; to remove these marks warm the ware, and with a cloth at end of a stick (for the protection of the fingers) apply a solution of two parts muriatic acid and one part nitric acid.

The metallic colors which have come to the aid of amateur painters, and the powders of which are laid on by a prepared solution, are calculated largely to aid amateurs in carrying out room decoration in flower designs on valances, lambrequins, screens and portières, as well as upon upholstery coverings. To paint with oil colors on linen it should be stretched and then warmed by passing over it a slightly heated iron; then varnish with beeswax dissolved in turpentine, or with suitable size. The transparent pigments or oil colors used should be ground in turpentine, or the oil colors instead may be mixed with varnish.

To paint on terra cotta first size it and mix with the water colors some Chinese white; after the painting is finished varnish.

To attach bronze powder to glass, stoneware or porcelain, scatter on any of these surfaces with a brush silicate of soda mixed with water; then throw on the powder from a bottle covered with gauze. Damaged bronze picture frames may thus be restored. To trace a colored design on linen, varnish it with a thin coat of Canada balsam dissolved in turpentine, to which add a few drops of castor oil. The varnish should not be very thick.

To imitate stained glass, paint leads in black at back of glass, then on opposite side use transparent colors mixed with linseed oil, paul varnish and turpentine; the addition of a little white lead will cause the paint to work easier and impart greater depth. Mantel pieces of marble or other stone may be colored or gilded by first putting on a wash of virgin white wax, which has been melted with sufficient turpentine to make it freely flow and then adding a little prepared sugar of lead to make the oil colors dry flat. Water colors may also be used.

Good colors for staining are: Blue—alkaline indigo dye. Red—dragon's blood in spirits of wine. Yellow—gamboge in spirits of wine. Gold color—sal-ammoniac, sulphate of zinc and verdigris, equal parts. Green—sap green in spirits of potash. Brown—tincture of logwood. Crimson—alkanet root in turpentine. These colors may be used for veining, according to taste. Panel paintings may be executed with oil on plates of zinc and then fitted to panels of dados or doors.

It is very desirable to be able to command a good molding composition. This, whether for compo ornament in relief or for modelling statuettes, will be found in a mixture of chalk, glue and paper paste.

